



your health & well-being

Five great things you can do for the environment, for yourself, and for your family
It IS easy, being green (with thanks to Kermit)

1. Be a “locavore” – buy local

Buying local means buying foods (or any goods or services) that are produced, grown, or raised as close to your home as possible. Fresher foods mean a greener kitchen and a healthier body. Look for locally sourced produce at your grocery store, and shop at local farm stands and farmers’ markets.

The fewer miles your food has to travel, the better. The quality is less likely to suffer during transportation, and less energy will be used to get it to your store. In the U.S., the average grocery store’s produce travels nearly 1,500 miles between the farm where it was grown and your refrigerator.

- Fresh food from local farms is healthier than industrially farmed products because it doesn’t spend days in trucks and on store shelves losing nutrients.
- Local foods from small farms usually undergo minimal processing, are produced in relatively small quantities, and are distributed within a few dozen miles of where they originate.
- Food processors use a large amount of paper and plastic packaging to keep food looking fresh for as long as possible.

2. Grow your own

Gardening is great exercise and fun for all the family. Even better, you know exactly what went into growing your produce and how it has been handled. And you won’t have to drive to the store for a couple of tomatoes or a head of lettuce!

If your town provides community garden plots, that is a great way to grow a bigger volume of your own produce. But you don’t need acres of space. With access to a deck or balcony, a roof, or a patch of ground no larger than a flower bed, you can get started. You can grow tomatoes or baby lettuce in pots on your balcony – just give them enough sunlight and keep them watered. Check your library or online for more on how to get started.

3. Use natural cleaners

Some common household items can be effective household cleaners (but first test on an inconspicuous area). They are also inexpensive, chemical-free, and easy to find.

- Baking soda – cleans, deodorizes, softens water, and scours.
- White vinegar – cuts grease and removes mildew, odors, some stains and wax buildup. Never use vinegar on marble surfaces. Don’t worry about your home smelling like vinegar. The smell disappears when it dries.
- Lemon juice – one of the strongest food acids, it is effective against most household bacteria.

4. Drink tap water rather than bottled

- It’s safer. Tap water has stricter standards and is more closely monitored than bottled water. Under the Safe Drinking Water Act, local water suppliers are required to test tap water daily and to report the quality of the water annually. In many cases, it also tastes better! If yours doesn’t, run your tap water through a filter system.
- It saves you money and means less plastic in your trash. Did you know that 60 million bottles a day go into U.S. landfills, where they can take up to 1,000 years to biodegrade? Producing those bottles consumes 1.5 million barrels of crude oil annually – enough to keep 100,000 cars running for a year. Using a filter for your tap water would cost about three cents a bottle versus \$1.25 or so for bottled water.
- It is a tooth saver, because it contains more fluoride than bottled water – and that helps prevent tooth decay.

5. Choose compact fluorescent light bulbs

Replace old-fashioned incandescent bulbs with compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs), which use 75 percent less energy and last 10 times longer. A typical 75-watt incandescent bulb can be replaced by a 20-watt CFL.

Some simple precautions when using CFLs:

- Don’t use them in closed fixtures.
- If you use dimmers, check that your CFL is safe to use with them.
- Check the packages for safety warnings and compatibility with different fixtures.
- At the end of their operating lives, CFLs should be disposed of properly as they contain mercury.



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it’s time to feel better®



may tip of the month

Make healthy snacks

Buy your favorite nuts and dried fruits from the bulk bins at your grocery store or natural foods shop, and make your own snack mix. You'll know what you have is fresh, with only the items you enjoy. It's usually cheaper, too.

Get some fresh air

Just 20 minutes in the open air can boost your energy for the whole day. It's good for your mood and helps to relieve stress, depression and anxiety. Instead of lunch at your desk, put on your sneakers and head out for a walk. You'll feel better for it!

Wash your hands

The single most important step you can take to stay healthy is simply to wash your hands. It's natural protection against colds and flu, and all the contagious bugs that live in our world.

One last thing: Don't just think about making the switch to living greener; actually do it. Today. It'll do you good. And it will do the world good.

On myCIGNA.com this month

One very valuable resource that needs conserving: your money! When it comes to your own spending on health care for you and your family, go to myCIGNA.com, click the myHealth tab, and check the [Cost and Quality Resources](#). You'll find information that will help you get the best value for your money.



Most Americans live about 60 miles from an apple orchard, but the apples you typically buy at the grocery store travel 1,726 miles between the orchard and your house. That's further than driving from Portland, Maine to Miami, Florida!

Source: Pirog, Rich, and Andrew Benjamin. "Checking the Food Odometer: Comparing Food Miles for Local Versus Conventional Produce Sales in Iowa Institutions." Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture, July 2003.



Important Contact Information

Two simple resources provide access to tools and information so that you and your family can take care of your health and wellness needs. You can go online, or call the number on your ID card.

Online

www.myCIGNA.com

Register, then log in for direct, secure access to your personal health information and plan benefits.

You can:

- Find a doctor or a Convenience Care center
- Track claims and account balances
- Get cost and quality information for hospitals, specialists and prescription medications
- Find health and wellness information from trusted resources.
- Compare costs for your covered prescription medications. Go to the Pharmacy tab to check prices at your area pharmacies.
- Check the Nurse Line audio library if you want to learn about a health topic or medical condition. Just go to myHealth, then click Health Information Line to view the complete catalog, or to download podcasts (mp3) on selected topics. (Download details are provided on the myCIGNA page.)

my health assessment

Complete this online questionnaire to get a clear picture of your overall health, and identify ways to protect or improve it. Go to myCIGNA, myHealth page.

Need help with stress? Trouble sleeping? Want to eat better, or be more active? **CIGNA Online Coaching Programs** will help you achieve your goals. Go to myCIGNA, myHealth page to start.

We're only a phone call away.

Need to speak to a health advisor, or check on the status of a claim? Call your Customer Service team for help.

Active employees: 800.633.8519 • Retirees: 800.942.6724

- Contact a **Health Advisor** if you or a family member has a specific health issue or condition. They can help you with chronic health conditions like diabetes, asthma, metabolic syndrome, low back pain, heart disease, and more. They can also guide you to programs to lose weight or quit smoking.
- **24-Hour Nurse Line**
Call any time to speak with a registered nurse for expert, reliable help and guidance. You can also listen to a health recording from the audio library. To access a recording first look up the topic and code number on myCIGNA.com, then call and follow the phone prompts to enter the 4-digit code and listen to the recording.
- **Healthy Babies**
Support for moms and babies from the start of pregnancy through delivery. Just call to enroll.
- Sometimes life can be hard to handle. If you are dealing with **mental health or substance abuse** issues, you and your dependents have access to the assistance you need, round the clock.

Address updates

You could be missing out on important mailings.

For active employees, please complete and submit a Change and Miscellaneous Update form (available online).

- Go to dch.georgia.gov/shbp. Click **SHBP forms** then **Eligibility forms**.
- Scroll to **Enroll or Update Coverage** and click **Change and Miscellaneous Update Form** to open the form.

Print out and complete the form, and return it to your payroll location benefit manager.

For retired employees, please submit the following information:

- Name
- Subscriber number from your CIGNA ID card or Social Security number
- Current address
- New address
- Telephone number
- Signature authorizing the address change

Retirees mail to:

State Health Benefit Plan
P.O. Box 1990
Atlanta, GA 30301



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